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Name of the Research Scholar:
Krishna Biswas
UGC-JRF
Regn. No.: VB-2327 of 2016- 2017

Forwarded by the Supervisor:
Dr. Premangshu Chakrabarty
Associate Professor of Geography
Visva-Bharati, Shantiniketan

Title of the Thesis:

GENDER PARTICIPATION IN CRAFT BASED RURAL TOURISM IN WEST BENGAL: A GEOGRAPHICAL APPRAISAL

Conceptual Framework:

Rural economy in our country is basically agriculture based. But the weather dependency and risk factor make this practice unprofitable in many parts of the country. At the same time, unplanned urbanization and land conversion have become another threat for people practicing agriculture. Socio-economic backwardness and attraction toward urban life nearly handicapped the traditional agrarian rural society. Out-migration is a dominating feature in rural areas. In this circumstance, rural tourism can be a saviour of rural life by generating new job opportunities and at the same time is able to preserve the age-old rural culture and heritage. On the other hand, hectic urban life always creates a temporary counter flow of urban tourists towards villages to enjoy the products of rural tourism in which women folk participates much as stakeholders and the concept of gender tourism has evolved from it. From the point of view of Rural Tourism, the traditional craft have tremendous potentiality not only to attract national and international tourists but also to provide an opportunity to empower rural women to move further towards gender equality.

As one of the fastest growing and most profitable industries in the world, tourism can provide limitless opportunities for economic development, particularly in developing

countries. It can generate income and employment effectively through the development of natural and cultural resources. It also provides local communities with the opportunity to express pride in their own culture, thus giving the impetus to revive threatened traditions and cultural practices.

Close connection with local community is an interesting characteristic of tourism from the beginning. But from 1960s it is challenged by the development of package tourism organised by tour operators of the source region, conducting through specialised transport and hotels. Emergence and popularity of the concept of holiday package moderate the scope of the guest's interaction with host community (Betton, 2006).But the negative impacts of mass tourism and sustainability issue encourage the researchers and planner to established alternative tourism aspects, like rural tourism. The prospect of community development and tourist's desire to interact with local community is very much considered in the sphere of rural tourism. Promoting rural life to the urban tourists from the point of view of sustainable tourism with the aim of benefiting the local community is generally consider as rural tourism. Rural tourism is an experience oriented activity which takes place in rural environment, sub-divided into farm/agricultural tourism, cultural tourism, nature tourism, adventure tourism, and eco-tourism. Seasonality and local events plays important role in rural tourism development and preservation of culture, heritage and traditions is important outcome of such activity (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk%3ARural_tourism). Countryside recreation is not completely a new concept. Expansion of industrial cities and the consequences of it on daily life gave birth of this kind of activities in the nineteenth century. But the present dimension of rural tourism is different from it in several ways. However it is noteworthy to mention that rural tourism is a complex multi-faceted activity but rurality is the central and unique selling point (USP) for promoting rural tourism (OECD, 1994).

Rural tourism is an effective tool for supporting the rural economy in the country like India where 68.84% population resides in villages as per 2011 census. The success of rural tourism however is lying on community participation including the active participation of women. Ministry of Tourism, Government of India had been considered this fact and have taken some initiatives regarding this issue. A collaborative effort between the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (MoT) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) named "The Endogenous Tourism Project- Rural Tourism Scheme" (ETP-RTS) have been initiated in 2003. The aims of the programme are - sustainable livelihoods, gender equality, empowerment of women, youth and other disadvantaged sections and working towards

cultural sensitivity and environmental sustainability. The list of Rural Tourism Sites and their USPs (Unique Selling Proposition or Unique Selling Point) dated on 31.3.11 attached in Ministry of Tourism, Government of India's website (tourism.gov.in/rural-tourism) enlisted 172 rural tourism sites, among them five sites belong to West Bengal. These sites are Ballabhpur Danga (Birbhum), Sonada Village (Darjeeling), Mukutmonipur (Bankura), Antpur (Hoogly), Kamarpukur (Hoogly) and the tourism campaigning is based on Folk Dance, Heritage , Sari weaving , Spiritual & Craft respectively. Before September 13th,2009, 108 rural tourism projects were sanctioned by Government of India. A report named "Impact & Evaluation Study of Rural Tourism Projects" published by Ministry of tourism, Government of India highlighted that among the earlier mentioned rural tourism sites two projects are averagely successful (Kamarpukur, Mukutmonipur), two are not successful (Ballavpur Danga, Sonada Village) and another one (Antpur) is complete failure. The present scholar intend to work on a particular aspect, which is rural craft, as a weapon for promoting rural tourism successfully by using gender lens to plane something progressive for the women associated with the craft villages.

Inequality lies in every sector of our society in different shades. Among them gender based inequality is present widely and its alarming condition makes it one of the central discussing issue in the study of Geography of Inequality. In common use, gender means difference between male and female. In the broad scenes the term gender represents inequality between sexes not only from physiological ground but also from socio-cultural stand point. Gender is something which is superficially constructed code of conduct, superimposed by society on human life. Gender role can be changed over space and time. Gender study in social sciences is very much relevant because it is about the asymmetrical power relation that exists between and among different genders, which create superior position for certain gender. In our patriarchal society this power and position is generally enjoyed by male gender. The asymmetrical power relation has more adverse effect on women than man. Male dominated power structure in our society is the disadvantage for women and such disadvantage marginalized their status in almost all sector of society. Women are participating in labour market but their work is not visible in any recorded document. In general women have few choices and again those choices are restricted and controlled by social, religious and economic norms and values. All round development of a society or a country is impossible until every person of it is involving in the developmental programme. Maximum initiatives taken from this context are emphasize on gender equality and women

empowerment but they are not entirely women centric. Undoubtedly the women are profited by these initiatives but the century old system need the equity concept more than giving some mere opportunity with male counterpart. There for planning something particularly for women during gender study is relevant and have great important for sustainable development.

Tourism industry is not free from the gender bias but this industry has a great potential for women empowerment. The term empowerment is use here in broader sense. A woman is economically empowered when she has both the ability to succeed and advance economically and the power to make and act on economic decisions (Golla, Malhotra, Nanda, and Mehra, 2011). The concept of 'Gender Responsible Tourism' is an important initiation of World Tourism Organisation (WTO) in this context. The term has been originated from the "Tourism Opens Doors for Women", an initiatives undertaken in World Tourism Day 2007 (WTD 2007) held at Bentota, Sri Lanka. Gender Responsible Tourism is aimed both at advancing women's best interests in the tourism sector and at promoting better tourism products. There are six pillars that are intended to provide a framework for action leading towards the achievement of gender responsible tourism – in other words an approach to tourism, which recognises the valuable contributions of women and seeks to redress existing inequities and injustices tourism as a whole. The Six Pillars of Gender Responsible Tourism are –

1. Promoting the quality, as well as quantity of women's engagement in the tourism sector.
2. Promoting equal access to opportunities in tourism for women.
3. Promoting a fair and equitable sharing of benefits from tourism.
4. Upholding the rights of women employed in tourism.
5. Opposing commoditisation and others forms of gender-based exploitation in the tourism sector.
6. Promoting Women's Voices and Leadership.

Women in Tourism Empowerment Programme (WITEP) has been taken by UNWTO for establishing tourism as a tool for the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, using gender analysis and gender training to tackle inequality and gender-based discrimination in the tourism industry.

Objective of the Study:

- To bring out the status of gender participation in craft making of the leading craft villages of Bengal.
- To investigate the scope of promoting rural tourism based on the attraction of craft making in villages.
- To make a comparison among different craft villages of West Bengal from gender development perspective.
- To explore the feasibility of promoting gender responsible tourism in craft villages empowering host guest relationship.

Methodology:

The primary data will be collected through field survey, face to face interview, observations, telephonic interview, literature review etc. For this propose open-ended and semi-structured questions will be used in the questionnaire. The secondary data will be collected from the different departments, working NGOs and from other sources. For this kind of research phenomenological approach may be useful to identify a general pattern among the shared experiences. At the same time besides considering the whole population in to account, non-probability sampling will be also considerable because the samples are not always evenly distributed over space. Qualitative, quantitative, mixed method, ethnography, triangulation are some commonly use method in social science studies which will be definitely be helpful for this particular research work.

Various cartographic techniques will also be adopted for the visual representation of the data and Statistical methods will also be used to analyze the collected data. Analytical part will be dealt by the SPSS Software (Latest Version), Microsoft Excel etc will be used to tabulate and analyze the data. Both conventional and modern methods will be used for spatial data presentation.

To fulfil the objectives of research, Image processing GIS software TNT mips will be used for thematic map preparation. GIS methodology may satisfy the following requirements:

- Geoprocessing to prepare thematic maps.
- DBMS (Data Base Management System) to facilitate integration of spatial data with non spatial data.

- Space visualization for planning.

Selection of the Study Area:

West Bengal is one of the eastern states of India and is the nation's fourth-most populous state, with over 91 million inhabitants and is spread over an area of 34,267 sq. mile (88,750 Sq.km.). The state is situated between $21^{o}38'00"$ to $27^{o}10'00"$ North latitude and $85^{o}58'00"$ to $89^{o}50'00"$ East longitude. Kolkata is the capital of the state. West Bengal is a State rich in resources which can be leveraged for tourism. West Bengal ranked 2nd and 4th respectively among Indian states in trams of population density and total population according to 2011 census. Besides, population control the only way to achieve sustainable development is to convert the population into resource. Introducing new kind of job opportunity is undoubtedly a solution for that. Not only that new field of employment can reduce the unhealthy competition and pressure from certain job types.

Handicrafts of Bengal embody our rich heritage of aesthetics, creativity and artistry. The craft sector provides low cost, green livelihood opportunities to more than 5.5 lakh men and women. In today's globalised world, the growing retail industry, fashion and luxury markets demand for green production. Potentiality of e-commerce has created new opportunities for developing a vibrant craft economy thereby providing increased income opportunities to the craft persons. Besides its high potential for employment, the craft sector is economically important from the point of low capital investment, high ratio of value addition, and high potential for export and foreign exchange earnings for the country. The Government of West Bengal thus aims to unleash the potential of the sector in terms of employment, enterprises, export and growth. Department of MSME&T (Department of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises & Textile, Government of West Bengal) and UNESCO, New Delhi, has collaborated to develop 10 rural craft hubs in the state. Contact Base (banglanatak dot com) is implementing the project with a vision to develop the villages with hundreds of families traditionally skilled in craft traditions like Sitalpati, Madurkathi, Terracotta, Patachitra, Dokra, Wooden Mask and Clay Doll making, Kantha as vibrant craft hubs connected to national and international markets (http://ruralcrafthub.com).Later they also involved different forms of art and music in their project and undoubtedly it is a very effective tool to promote homestay based rural tourism and gender empowerment in many sites. It is noteworthy to mention that this kind of initiatives has the potentiality of putting those remote and economically backward areas in the Tourist map of West Bengal.

In these craft villages the whole family is somehow engaged in art and craft production. Women of these families expertly perform their "reproduction" and "production" role. But the field experience reveal that in some villages the contribution of female folk is not well recognised anywhere in the society. Women are treated just as a helper without considering their substantial contribution. Women also have the same view about their role in the craft making. Socio-economic status of women is not equal to that of the men.

It is noteworthy to mention that these craft hubs have become a centre of attraction from the tourism point of view. Some of the villages have their own dormitory type of accommodation facility for visitors. The villagers, especially the women get training to handle visitors. The three days long village fair can be recognised as the peak time to visit those places. But some of the places have enough potentiality to attract tourist throughout the year with proper tourism planning. In the present study, focus is given on every established rural craft hub and also upon different craft villages distributed in different districts of West Bengal to identify the scope of rural tourism by using a gender lens.

Literature Review:

Socio-cultural construction of an individual's sexual identity i.e. gender is an important discussion issue among different social science studies. Different socio-cultural research works of eminent scholars have been followed to understand and generalise the common pattern and concept of gender study in geography. **Momsen and Townsend (1989)** in their edited book, have covered different dimensions of gender studies like sex ratio, production and reproduction role of women, malnutrition, changing statues in labour market, migration and gender, industrialization etc. from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds in the field of gender geography. **Massey (1994)** has explained the relation between space place and gender, according to the author "*Geography matters to the construction of gender, and the fact of geographical variation in gender relations, for instance, is a significant element in the production and reproduction of both imaginative geographies and uneven development*". **Brooks (2006)** explored the globalization effect on professional women of third world by her study on Hong Kong and Singapore and reveal that besides providing new opportunity for women the new economy creates a new pattern of disparity. Eco-feminism is another sector of discussion where geographers can contribute a lot during discussing different gender attributes. **Sandilands (1999)** has given through information about ecofeminism in his book. **Bryant and Pini (2011)** focussed on "categories

such as ‘rural woman’ and ‘rural man,’ and explored the ways in which gender coexists and melds with indignity, ethnicities, class, sexuality, disability, and age for women and men living in Australian rural locales” in their book. **Raju and Dutta (2011)** in their edited book identified gender studies as a less-trodden field in their discussion of historical background and problem to establish the study area among proven and orthodox research areas. Different articles of Raju (individual or with co-author) are helpful to understand the trend of contemporary gender researches in the field of geography. In her special lecture at Presidency University, Kolkata, Raju (2017) focus on the reason and logic to study different gender aspects in the geography. According to her gender is superficially constructed and conducted code of conduct, which can be change over time and space. And at the same time meaning and importance of spatial interaction can be change according to the position of a particular gender. She mentioned that gender study is about the asymmetrical power relation among different gender, commonly between male and female. But in this context this asymmetrical power relation has more effect on women than men. Therefore emphasis on female gender is common in gender researches.

Swain (1995), an eminent figure in the study of tourism and gender has stressed the importance of the study of gender in tourism and has also simultaneously focused on commonalities and distinctions in gender tourism experience over the course of time. The author while discussing gender and tourism has asserted that tourism industry is mainly based on the interrelationship between people in a gendered society where both men and women are involved quite distinctively in the construction and consumption of tourism. In her edited book, **Sinclair (1997)** highlighted different aspect of gender in the context of tourism industry. The articles, written by eminent scholars, are focused upon different topics, like the gender bias present in tourism labour market, homestay, sex tourism etc. from different socio-economical background of different countries. **Baum (2013)** basically focused on gender scenario HCT (Hotels, Catering and Tourism) sector**. Henderson (1994)** has places special significance on the value of acknowledging the women issues especially women empowerment in leisure studies. In a research article, **Henderson and Shaw (2006)** have revealed the way gender commonly relates to the experiences and meanings of leisure in the everyday life, not only to leisure activities and behaviours. **Parry (2015)** has discussed the relational politics of gender and leisure in a lucid way from two different and unique perspectives- how gender influence leisure and how leisure affect gender. In the domain of leisure studies, most of the gender oriented research has been conducted from a feminist

perspective. The author has also highlighted a commonly overlooked fact that there are significant differences among and within groups of men and groups of women depending upon their life stage, age, socio-economic status, sexual identity, ethnicity, abilities etc. Gender difference does not necessarily means the difference between groups of men and women only. She also stresses the fact that in the beginning women issues were ignored in leisure studies. Impact of tourism on host society especially on women is an important and well discussed issue in gender tourism studies. **Beedle et al (2013)** supported this opinion in an article by using Ecological System Theory as a framework while examine related research works. **Jucan and Jucan (2013)** have investigated the most relevant gender trends which affects tourism and women participation in a destination. They are of the opinion that those countries which were able to reduce the gender gap became economically more successful. Gender patterns in tourism destinations are significant issues in this context because of the increasing importance of tourism industry in the present world. Men and Women, as a host or guest are not equally benefitted from tourism. Studies focusing on this view have become quite popular among social science researcher. **Harvey, Hunt and Harris (Jr) (1995)** have in this context investigated on whether women and men had different types of perceptions and also sought to find out if the presence of differences at various tourism dependence levels. **Caber, Güven, and Öztürk (2016**) in a recently published article have explored the extent to which local products can be the motivations of the visitors and businesses to visit a destination. This type of study is quite relevant as the organizers of an event or fair and other authorities may get a fair idea of how to match to those motivations. **O'Sullivan and Jackson (2002)** have looked into the different facets of festival tourism along with the scope of festival tourism as a significant contributor to economic development of a destination. The authors have also discussed the advantages and disadvantages of festival tourism in a destination. **Wilkinson and Pratiwi (1995)** have successfully applied gender analysis approach to gender roles and relationships e.g. employment patterns, family structure and functions, income, and child-rearing. They have shed light on the quality of life of women particularly which have not been given enough attention. The central theme of an important research work by **Pritchard and Morgan (2000)** is the gender relations in the production and consumption of tourism experiences and images. Their study includes the discussion on the gendered nature of society, interrelationship between the language of patriarchy and (hetero) sexuality, the language of tourism promotion etc. **Marie Golla, Malhotra, Nanda, and Mehra (2011)** in their seminal research work have put special emphasis on devising a

measurement framework that which may guide the design, implementation and evaluation of different types of programs for the sole purpose of economically empower women.

Study about the craft industry as a rural economic development tool is common in both in national and local level. Discussion about craft villages as a tourism destination, discussion about women centric craft is another view point but this kind of studies are not so common especially at local level. **Sinha, Chakrabortty and Sinha (2015)**, discuss Dokra craft as a living archaeological remnant of Neolithic figurine art and it also the remnant of non-ferrous metallic craft of pre Iron era besides discussing about the modernised techniques they used now a days. **Satpathi** (2011), in his paper focuses on the problems and possibilities of the terracotta art. **Jana (2008)** focuses on how globalization creates an international market for the Indian crafts. He also argued about the prospect and possibilities of human development by proper initiatives for handicraft industry of India. According to him "*careful intervention is needed to prevent hijacking of profits, intrusion of middlemen, to promote marketing and to maintain originality/identity of the products therefore ensuring high growth in this sector. This will help the artists enlarging their choices in life and expanding human capabilities, something which could lead to human development*." How design intervention can be helpful for development of craft industry is the prime focus of **Kapur and Mittar (2014).** The define design intervention as "*a process that involves designing new products; redesigning existing products, with changes in shape, size, colour, surface manipulation, function and utility; exploring new markets and reviving lapsed markets; applying traditional skills to meet new opportunities and challenges; and the introduction of new materials, new processes, new tools and technologies*." **Reddy (2012)** have shown the importance of handicrafts in promoting rural tourism in Indian context. In his book, he has discussed various problems of the craft maker, especially men. But have not shed and emphasis on the women workers. While discussing the cottage industry of Bengal, **Chakrabarty** (1935) has highlighted the different handicraft industry scenario, its evolution, degradation and possibilities. **Maity (2001)** in his book on Patachitra has put forwarded a detailed discussion on its unique nature, characteristics, Pat songs, the makers and the present condition of the artists in a lucid manner.

Tamandani, Bostani and Miri (2015) have shown how empowerment (economic and cultural) of women in Zahedan through tourism has open new avenue for women. **Sharma and Tiwari (2014)** in their paper investigated the possibilities offered by the rural culture of India to emerge as an international rural tourism destination. In their words "*Rural India has*

much to offer to the world rich in tradition of arts, crafts, and culture. Rural India can emerge as important rural tourist destination. Those who have a craze for knowledge about traditional ways of living, arts and crafts can possibly be attracted to visit the country life of India; if the concept of rural tourism is promoted strategically .Tourism growth potential can be harnessed as a strategy for Rural Development. The development of a strong platform around the concept of rural tourism is defiantly useful for a country like India, where 74% of the population resides in its 7 million villages." **Seal (2002)** in her scholarly article, based on a small rural area of Karnataka, established the fact that women participation in rural tourism has increased the power of women within both the family and the community. She referred some countries like Spain, Greece, France, Britain, and Ireland, from global perspective also to strengthen her view. A study on 150 craft-women of Kullu valley of Himachal Pradesh was conducted by **Bansal and Kumar (2011).** In their article, they have focussed on the positive impact of tourism upon rural women related to the craft industry. **Aref & Gill (2009)**used qualitative approaches to illustrate the development of rural tourism through rural cooperatives in their paper. Their study was conducted in Iran and they also give emphasis on the problem of initiation of this kind of tourism. In the paper entitled '**Challenges of rural tourism - time to reconsider women as instruments of rural tourism promotion**', the author **Gangadhara (2015)** have discussed the 'issues relating to rural women as promoters of rural tourism' from different perspectives.

Some important web sources for understanding the present trend of gender studies in tourism sphere, rural tourism, district profile of West Bengal, rural craft etc. are as follows:

- equalityintourism.org
- http://www.equitabletourism.org
- www.ilo.org
- www.timesofmalta
- https://www.ecotourism.org
- www.genderresponsibletourism.org
- www2.unwto.org
- ethics.unwto.org
- https://en.m.wikipedia.org
- www.wbtourism.gov.in
- www.tourism.wa.gov.au
- www.tourismconcern.org.uk
- www.unep.org
- www.wttc.org
- http://www.sustainabletourismonline.com
- www.westbengal.gov.in
- www.tripura.org.in
- www.hinduwebsite.com
- www.carnatica.net/bengalmusic.htm
- nabayanroy.wordpress.com
- www.beautifulbengal.com
- www.daricha.org
- incredibleindia.org/lang/images/docs/trade-pdf/.../rural-tourism
- tourism.gov.in/rural-tourism
- http://www.indianetzone.com
- http://www.rangamaati.com
- http://taleof2backpackers.com
- http://ruralcrafthub.com

Relevancy of Theme:

West Bengal has a glorifying history of rural art and craft. In the past, the villages were self-sufficient in terms of needs and requirement. The problem arises when the traditional products are replaced by newly introduced cheap foreign products and loses their market. Some art and craft lost their patron in the British regime; some are lost because of the less interest of the artist. Change of the social-cultural structure and urge for an urban based secure job, handicapped these age old traditions. This situation lasted over a long period. But still, some of these art and craft forms are kept alive by some artists in remote places. It is an established fact that the socio-economic conditions of the craft based families are very poor but women are poorest among poor. Therefore women centric discussion is equally important for all round development of these craft villages. Presently Government of West Bengal and some Non-Governmental bodies work together to restore the past glory of these crafts and emphasises on the wellbeing of the artists which is the most important task to do to rejuvenate the art and crafts. Undoubtedly rural tourism is an affecting tool to ensure the development of these remote places.

The unique craft making attracts the attention of both domestic and international tourists. Linkage between craft industry and tourism is vital in respect of women empowerment arising from their inherent ability and skills. Most of the souvenir industries are characteristically village oriented and suitable for female artisans. Another reason for women dominance in craft industry is nothing but the availing of opportunity of making additional income for the family while the male members are engaged in traditional pursuits but not able in earning enough for running respectable livelihood. For religious and social restrictions imposed upon the rural women, they are not usually allowed to make contact directly with the outsiders. But products manufactured by them are subjected to the appreciation of visitors. Governmental initiatives are essential for marketing of these souvenirs which ultimately leads to gender development. A number of NGOs have also come forward with initiatives to increase women participation in handicraft and handloom sector. Such authorities are regularly organising various events, fairs, workshops etc to promote their products as souvenirs drawing the attention of the tourists. The Government of West Bengal for example is engaged in promoting their traditional crafts like Terracotta, Dokra, Baluchuri etc.

Regarding sustainability issues, conservation and protection of the tourism and environmental resources it is to be investigated that whether there is any difference in the

perception which can justify the hypothesis that female are more efficient in conservation of resources- in case of the study area whether it is applicable or not i.e. the concept of ecofeminism relates with sustainable tourism or not, if relates, to what extent. According to ecofeminism view point, Women's concerns about the environment derive from their experiences of particular problems experienced in private. The environment becomes an important issue when it impinges on the security of the personal sphere, the home, the family.

From the ecofeminism context, it can be said that tourism sector and women participation enrich each other. With the development of tourism sector, social status of women can be improved by providing empowerment. On the other hand, women's emotional attachment with their jobs also plays a great role in the protection and nourishment of tourism resource like crafts.

With the development of tourism in a place, there will be certain positive and negative socio-cultural and economic changes and the gender inequality scenario would also take a different turn. It has been observed that gender inequality has decreased where tourism has flourished. It is to be investigated that in the districts of West Bengal (the study area) which are enjoying the fruits of tourism whether there is any change in gender discrimination or not.

Homestay is the most effective sector for women engagement in tourism business. Little infrastructural development is required for promoting homestay. There is no need to provide hotel like facilities. The visitors must be aware about the fact that they are here for experiencing rural life; therefore they can't demand urban facilities. In this way the rural life and culture will sustain in spite of promoting tourism.

Beside traditional craft the beautiful rural landscape can be consider as another attraction for promoting tourism in these craft villages. At the same time the urban based women who are not able to travel alone due to the security problem but want to travel, will be able to fulfil their desire by coming here as a learner of different rural craft and culture as it happen in case of Japan. Where by hosting residential weaving vacations for women, Nagano Prefecture became a favourite destination for urban based Japanese women who are not able to travel alone only for pleasure but they can travel for education and training purpose (Creighton, 1995). The possibilities of establishing this kind of set up for women in the craft villages are another area to explore. The interested rural women needs training for managing and conducting this kind of initiatives.

The proposed study would be divided into several chapters while writing the Ph.D. thesis:

Chapter 1.Introduction

Chapter 2.Gender Empowerment Scenario in West Bengal

Chapter 3.Rural Tourism and Rural Women

Chapter 4.Craft Village of Bengal: Habitat, Economy and Society

Chapter 5.Gender and Craft Making: A Comparison between Craft Villages

Chapter 6: Planning 'Gender Responsible Tourism' in the craft villages

Chapter 7: Conclusion

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Appendix

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